

1. The Merit of Offering Water

There are eleven benefits of 'offering water' according to *Therīapadānapāli* – 1.

Sumedhāvagga – 10. *Udakadāyikātherīapadāna* .¹ Not long ago, however, I have visited National Museum in Yangon - and there, in the second floor near an exhibited water pot, I have seen a poster with a different list, in this case containing ten different benefits. It is possible that these ten have been developed later by monks as a universal list, because the first list of eleven is only for women. The story of *Apadāna* speaks of a lady who gained her great merits as she earned her living as a water-carrier 91 eons ago. Remarkably, in the Pāli there is no mention that she offered any water to a Buddha or any other recluse.

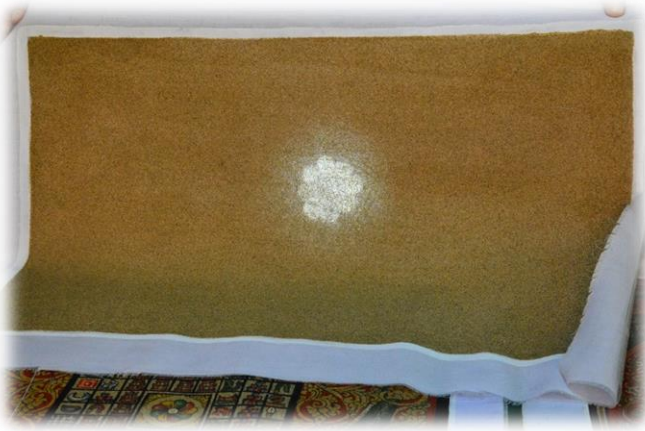
<i>Udakadāyikātherīapadāna</i> . (Translated from the Burmese translation to English by monk Sarana.)	Yangon National Museum's poster (Translated from Burmese to English by mS.)
1. Being the noblest among one thousand goddess, she surpasses them in ten ways.	1. Long life-span.
2. Fifty times born as the queen of king of gods.	2. Beautiful appearance.
3. Twenty times born as the queen of Wheel-Monarch (i.e. supreme monarch whole galaxy)	3. Satisfaction. (I.e. wealth and happiness.)
4. Living only either in human world or heaven.	4. Great physical power.
5. Quickly obtaining water even if (she) is present on the top of a mountain, tip of a tree, or in sky.	5. Power in command.
6. Able to make rain whenever needed.	6. Great knowledge and wisdom.
7. Absent in places where is no rain, where it's very hot.	7. Uninterrupted supplies of food and drink.
8. No excessive heat in the body (i.e. perhaps no sickness caused by excessive heat).	8. Freedom from sicknesses and fear.
9. No vagueness in (her) appearance.	9. Gaining whatever is desired.
10. Since the life when (she) offered water, for ninety-one eons (she) didn't enter a state of woe.	10. Abundant retinue.
11. In (her) last life, being a person of a particularly clear mind, 'drying up' (all her) defilements, (she) became an Arahant.	

Myanmar people have great trust in these lists, whether the first or the second, and try their best to earn merits for their bright future. Thus they keep 'water pots' even along streets and in official buildings.

¹ There is another case of a lady who offered water, and this was for a monk, (according to the commentary) for cleaning his mouth and also for drinking. See *Vimānavatthupāli* – 1. *Itthivimānaṃ* - 5. *Guttīlavimānaṃ* - 8. *Udakadāyikāvimānavatthu* . In this story however she gain one merit by that act – she is the best goddess among thousand goddesses. Interestingly, there is no commentary for *Therīapadāna* included in the present *Tipiṭaka* collection, hence we have no additional information about Udakadāyikā Therī apart from the main Pāli text.

2. Sand Pictures in Bagan

In Bagan there is a number of shops at several pagodas, where a tourist may purchase a 'sand picture'. These pictures are of different qualities (i.e. thickness of the grain-layer), different colors and images. See photos below for better understanding.



Sand is placed on paper and then on a bright table.



Because of the bright table it is possible to see the lines of stencil which is kept between the sand-paper and the light.



First the artist draws the lines as they are in the stencil, in black&white.



Just after that he colors those lines and spaces.



Coloring a sand picture.



Coloring a sand picture.



Here we can see two different qualities of sand picture. The one on the left is made on a very thin layer of sand, and thus it is lower quality. The picture on the right side is of better quality, made on a thicker layer of sand. The sand layers are gradual, so some pictures have two layers, some five layers, etc.

May all beings be happy :-)

Monk Sarana